

XL.—*The Fourth International Ornithological Congress.*

THE International Ornithological Committee held its Fourth Quinquennial Congress at the London University, Imperial Institute Buildings, during Whitweek.

Some 300 members from all parts of the globe, including most of those best known in the ornithological world, attended.

Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe was President, with Dr. E. Hartert and Mr. J. L. Bonhote as Secretaries; while Mr. C. E. Fagan, of the British Museum, acted as Treasurer. These gentlemen were assisted in their duties by Drs. Godman, Selater, and Penrose, the Hon. Walter Rothschild, Messrs. Meade-Waldo, Ogilvie-Grant, and Witherby, who formed the Organising Committee. The Ibis was also well to the fore, as the emblem of a very prettily designed badge, universally worn during the meetings.

Among the many Foreign Delegates and Ornithologists who were present we may notice: Dr. Oustalet of Paris, President of the Congress of 1900; Dr. Bureau of Nantes; Baron de Guerne; MM. Ternier, Loyer, and Debreuil, of Paris; Dr. R. Blasius of Brunswick; Hans, Graf v. Berlepsch and Dr. Reichenow of Berlin; Dr. Lorenz of Austria; Dr. Helm of Chemnitz. Hungary sent a strong contingent, including Herr Otto Herman, Herr Stefan Chernel von Chernelhaza, Herr F. A. Cerva, Dr. G. Hoðrvath, Herr T. Csörzey. Italy was represented by Dr. Giglioli and Count Arrigoni degli Oddi; Holland by Baron Snouchaert van Schauburg and Dr. Büttikofer; Belgium by Dr. Alphonse Dubois; Russia by Dr. Bianchi of St. Petersburg, and Baron Loudon. From Sweden came Dr. Einar Lönnberg; from America, Dr. Stejneger, Mr. Frank M. Chapman, and Dr. Dwight; from Switzerland, Drs. Fatio and Studer; from Bulgaria, Dr. Paul Leverkühm; from Madeira, Padre Ernesto Schmitz. Australia sent Mr. F. M. Littler, and Mr. F. M. Fleming came from Toronto. British Ornithologists attended in numbers, most of the well-known members of the Union were present; Bird Protection was represented by a strong contingent,

including Dr. Montague Sharpe, President, and Mr. and Mrs. Lemon, Secretaries of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

The members held an informal meeting at the Imperial Institute Buildings on Whit Monday evening, and settled down to work on the following morning. The Congress was formally opened by Dr. Oustalet, the ex-President, with a few short and appropriate words. He then vacated the Chair in favour of Dr. Sharpe, who gave a most instructive and interesting address on the origin and progress of the national bird-collection in the British Museum. The Congress was divided into five Sections, and the following gentlemen selected as Presidents and Secretaries thereof:—

Section I.—SYSTEMATIC ORNITHOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

*President.* Dr. P. L. Selater.

*Vice-Presidents.* Hans, Graf v. Berlepsch and Prof. Dr. Reichenow.

*Secretaries.* Dr. Parrot and Mr. Ogilvie-Grant.

Section II.—MIGRATION.

*President.* Herr Otto Herman.

*Vice-Presidents.* Dr. Bianchi and Mr. Howard Saunders.

*Secretaries.* Herr Titus Csörzey and Mr. H. F. Witherby.

Section III.—BIOLOGY AND OOOLOGY.

*President.* Dr. Fatio.

*Vice-Presidents.* Dr. L. Stejneger and Prof. Dr. H. A. Giglioli.

*Secretaries.* Baron Snouchaert van Schauburg and Mr. E. Bidwell.

Section IV.—ECONOMIC ORNITHOLOGY.

*President.* Mr. H. E. Dresser.

*Vice-Presidents.* Prof. Dr. Blasius and Prof. Dr. Einar Lönnberg.

*Secretaries.* Herr Chernel von Chernelhaza, Dr. F. G. Penrose.

Section V.—AVICULTURE.

*President.* Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo.

*Vice-Presidents.* Freiherr Hans von Berlepsch, Baron de Guerne.

*Secretaries.* Dr. Büttikofer and Mr. D. Seth-Smith.

The following gentlemen were elected Vice-Presidents of the General Meetings:—His Grace the Duke of Bedford, Prof. Dr. Oustalet, Prof. Giglioli, Prof. Reichenow, Herr Otto Herman, The Hon. W. Rothschild, Dr. Godman, Dr. Selater.

In the afternoon, meetings of Sections I. and IV. were held. At the first-mentioned, Graf von Berlepsch gave an interesting account of some new Neotropical birds, Dr. R. Blasius spoke at some length on the never-ending theme of nomenclature, and Dr. Louis Bureau read a paper dealing with the Roseate Tern on the coast of Brittany. In the fourth Section, that devoted to Economic Ornithology, a most successful meeting was held. Mr. T. Digby Piggott read a paper on the Protection Laws in Great Britain and Ireland, regretting the absence of uniformity in the various countries and making some suggestions, regarding which he hoped the Congress would express some definite opinion. In the same Section Sir John Cockburn described the Protection Acts of Australia, and an interesting discussion on these two papers followed, in which many members took part.

In the evening, a visit, by the courtesy of the Directors, was paid to the Exhibition at Earl's Court, and, although the arrangements had to be somewhat modified owing to a recent fire in a part of the grounds, most of the members met together and a very enjoyable evening was spent.

On Wednesday morning the General Meeting was opened by a paper by Mr. Frank M. Chapman on "What constitutes a Museum Collection of Birds?" in the course of which the method at the British Museum came in for high praise, as exceeding in instructive value any other collection the lecturer had hitherto seen. Great stress was laid on the two main objects to be borne in mind, viz. adequate exhibition and opportunities for research. The American methods were described and illustrated by an excellent series of lantern-slides. Dr. Dwight read an important paper on colour-change as brought about by abrasion, which was followed by a short paper by Dr. Leverkühn on the nesting of the Egyptian Vulture and Imperial Eagle. Herr Otto Herman's paper on Bird-Migration, a summary of which was read in English by Mrs. Ilona Ginever, dealt, in the first place, with the various theories on migration; and then proceeded to describe the methods used in Hungary for recording the

arrival of some of the commoner migrants, the Swallow in particular, and the conclusions arrived at therefrom. The meeting was brought to a close by Mr. Scherren's paper on the first Bird-List of Eber and Peueer.

In the afternoon, meetings of Sections I. and III. were held: in the former Mr. Pycraft lectured on "Nestling Birds and their Relation to Evolution," and suggested that a careful study of nestlings tended to shew that all birds were at one time arboreal and nidifugous, and that they had diverged in two directions, those nesting on the ground having become still more nidifugous, while among those that still nested in trees the young had become further specialised and more helpless. In this Section also Padre Schmitz read a paper on the Birds of Maderia; and other communications of technical interest were made by both Count and Freiherr von Berlepsch.

In Section III. the members were treated to what was perhaps, from the popular point of view, one of the greatest treats of the Congress, by the exhibition of a beautiful series of slides, taken and prepared by Mr. Frank Chapman, of Flamingoes and Pelicans at their breeding-quarters in the Bahamas and Florida respectively. The details in the life-history of these species elucidated and explained by these splendid series of slides are invaluable and also an object-lesson in what may be accomplished by time, energy, and perseverance.

In the evening a *Conversazione* was held at the Natural History Museum, which was well attended by the members as well as by a number of specially invited guests.

Thursday was, by the kindness of the Hon. W. Rothschild, spent at Tring. The event of the day was his lecture on "Extinct and vanishing Birds," illustrated by the marvellous collection contained in the Tring Museum; and, to make the exhibition as complete as possible, Mr. G. E. Lodge had produced a wonderful picture of the small *Dinornis*, and Mr. Frohawk life-size reproductions of the Moa, the Giant Rail (*Leguatia*), and the Solitaire. The paper, which was read in the Victoria Hall, was divided by the lecturer into three heads: birds already extinct, those

on the verge of extinction, and those threatened with extinction, and the more notable points on all headings were well brought forward and illustrated. After the lecture a bounteous lunch was served, and the party then divided—some going to examine further specimens in the Museum, others driving to the Reservoirs or round the Park.

Friday morning was devoted to a General Meeting, at which Dr. Bureau exhibited a bound volume of Brisson's plates, coloured. The lettering on the original plates had been removed and new lettering added, suggesting therefore that it was not merely a collection of the plates coloured, but rather a separate edition. Dr. Bureau stated, however, that he had been unable to see or hear of a similar example. The copy in question had been purchased at the sale of the late M. Milne-Edwards's library. Mr. Bonhote read a paper, illustrated by specimens and slides, of his experiments in hybridising Ducks; and, after shewing the hybrids he had obtained, which included crosses between three, four, and five distinct species, and for which a special terminology was suggested, he then went on to point out that hybrids shewed great range of variation and that such variations followed on the lines of "pœcilomeres." It was also suggested that variations generally followed definite lines, and that many so-called cases of reversion were merely due to variation on these lines. Dr. Leverkühn brought to the notice of the Congress some of Prof. Naumann's correspondence, and he hoped the Congress would support the meditated publication of these letters. Dr. Hartert's paper dealt with the "Principal Aims of Modern Ornithology," laying stress on accuracy of labelling and careful and minute study. Dr. Wilson's paper on the Birds of the Antarctic, illustrated by his splendid series of slides, brought the morning's work to a close.

In the afternoon the Lord Mayor held a reception at the Mansion House which was largely attended, and an opportunity of visiting the Guildhall was also taken advantage of by many members.

In the evening a very successful dinner was held at the

Frascati Restaurant, at which the Foreign Members were the guests of the B. O. U.

Saturday, being the last day of real work, was of necessity a somewhat busy one. Proceedings were opened by Mr. Bruce, who gave a very interesting account of the Scottish Antarctic Expedition, illustrated by a beautiful series of slides.

In the Avicultural Section Mr. Seth-Smith read a most interesting paper on this branch of ornithology, pointing out how much may be accomplished by scientific aviculture in solving many problems, especially in the direction of changes of plumage, moult, pairing- and nesting-habits, polyandry, and so forth. The lecture, which was largely attended, was followed by a discussion on several points relating to the subject, more especially as regards the importation of live birds; but, owing to lack of time, the Section rose without passing any definite resolutions.

In the Economic Section a paper by Herr Svetozar was read in his absence by Dr. Penrose, the Secretary; it dealt with the Sparrow and its ravages, and an interesting discussion followed, raising doubts as to whether the Sparrow was any practical use as an insect-destroyer.

In the Migration Section, Dr. Helm read a paper on the Autumnal Migration of the Starling.

The chief paper of note in Section I. was one by Dr. Dwight on the "Significance of Sequence in Moults and Plumages." Dr. Dwight is well known in America for his very careful and accurate work on this subject, and his paper on the plumages of the Passerine Birds of New York is one that might well be imitated by some young and energetic ornithologist in this country. How many of us know exactly how and when the Sparrow moults?

In the afternoon the concluding meeting was held. The President stated that at a meeting of the Permanent Committee it had been decided that the next Congress should be held in Berlin, with Dr. Reichenow as President; but that if it was found impracticable to hold it in Berlin it should be held in Brussels under the Presidentship of Dr. Dubois.

An amendment was moved by Dr. Sclater that in the event of Dr. Reichenow being unable to accept the Presidentship, the Congress should meet in some other city in Germany under the Presidency of Dr. Blasius. This amendment was agreed to. Mr. Rothschild then moved that the Congress should communicate with the Governments of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, asking them to endeavour to put an end to the destruction of Penguins and other birds—boiled down for oil—which was going on in the Macquaries and other islands; after some discussion, this was agreed to, and the Congress was formally dismissed by the President.

The first three days of the following week were devoted to excursions. On Monday a special train conveyed the members to Ridgmont, whence Woburn Park was reached. The Duke and Duchess of Bedford met the party and the first halt was made to enable the Giraffes, Ostriches, and European Bison to be viewed, after which a considerable drive was made through the Park, affording a splendid view of the various deer and antelopes, and finally near the Abbey of enormous flocks of water-fowl. On Tuesday a visit was paid to Cambridge, where many matters of interest to ornithologists were laid out in the Museum, and luncheon was served at Magdalene College. Dr. Sharpe, in a short speech thanking the Master and Fellows for having allowed the Congress to lunch in their Hall, proposed the health of Professor Newton, which was warmly seconded in short and appropriate speeches by Drs. Oustalet, Reichenow, Fatio, Mr. F. M. Chapman, and others. Professor Newton, in replying, reminded the Congress that they had come on a bird-nesting expedition to see the nest whence had flown 'The Ibis,' now so widely known, and that the nest was made and the young 'Ibis' fledged in the room immediately above that in which they had left their coats and hats. After luncheon a number of members drove to Fen Ditton to see Mr. Bonhote's Aviaries, whilst others went round the Colleges. At 5 o'clock those going to Bridlington left by special train, reaching their destination late that night. The following morning they started off in

brakes under the guidance of Mr. Boynton, who had charge of the local arrangements, and after visiting Flamborough lighthouse and the cliffs adjoining, proceeded to Bempton, where fine views were obtained of the cliff-climbers and their method of work. Mr. Nelson, of Redcar, had kindly distributed a specially printed extract relating to the cliff-climbing from his forthcoming 'Birds of Yorkshire,' and personally acted as eicerone. Luncheon was served at the cliff edge in a tent, and, after a photograph had been taken, the majority returned to Bridlington and London, thus terminating what was universally acknowledged as a highly successful and pleasant gathering.

---

XLI.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 498.]

89. '*Avicultural Magazine.*'

[*Avicultural Magazine.* The Journal of the Avicultural Society. New Series. Vol. iii. Nos. 4-9. London: Feb.-July 1905.]

In these numbers our contemporary continues its career of interesting and useful work, and succeeds in adding greatly to our knowledge of the habits of birds. Allowance must, of course, be made to some extent for the different conditions in which birds live in cages, aviaries, and the wild state; but with regard to their notes, their nests and eggs, not to mention other details, we are much indebted to the careful observations made by various members of the Avicultural Society. Among so large a number of articles of varying style, it would be invidious to make any selection, but we may mention Dr. Butler's *résumé* of our knowledge of the Duration of Incubation.

Mr. Beebe's "Notes on the Psychology of Birds" is of very general interest; while the papers by Capt. Horsbrugh on the Bloemfontein district, by Mr. L. M. Seth-Smith on that of Uganda, and by Mr. Trevor-Battye on the breeding of